



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 33 Years of Leadership & Advocacy

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MEMBERS

Kecia B. Weller
President

Janet A. Neal
1st Vice President

John B. Troost
2nd Vice President

Bernard Siegel
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Wan Chun Chang
Michael G. Gureckas
Maria Mustelier-Parrish
Donna Pomerantz
Alexia Teran
Harley D. Rubenstein
Wendy L. Welt
Sheila D. Wright

MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, August 20, 2008, in Room 140 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by 1st Vice President Janet A. Neal at 1:20 p.m. Roll call was taken by Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission Staff and the following Commissioners were present at the meeting: President Kecia B. Weller, 1st Vice President Janet A. Neal, 2nd Vice President John B. Troost, Treasurer Bernard Siegel, Commissioners Wan Chun Chang, Alexia Teran, Harley D. Rubenstein, and Wendy L. Welt. Commissioners, Michael G. Gureckas, Maria Mustelier-Parrish, Donna Pomerantz, and Sheila D. Wright were not present.

APPROVAL OF THE July 16, 2008 MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Welt, seconded by Treasurer Siegel, and unanimously carried, the minutes for the meeting of July 16, 2008 were approved with the following corrections:

Page 5 Under COMMITTEE REPORTS, Public Relations Committee

- Michael Agrille **Arrigo**, who has a television show in West Hollywood that deals with issues of people living with HIV.

1st Vice President Neal further added that she will be doing a segment on Mr. Agrille's **Arrigo's** television show, and will secure a DVD of the show for the Commission.

INSTALLATION OF THE PRESIDENT for 2008-2009 Term

Mr. Don Ashton, Deputy Executive Officer of the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, officiated the oath of office for Kecia B. Weller for the Office of President for the 2008-2009 Term.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Block discussed how the *plastic bag tax/plastic bag ban* in the County of Los Angeles would affect the disability community and the economy in the United States (U.S.).

Maria Villaseñor reported her dissatisfaction with Access Services Inc. (ASI). She stated that often times patrons of ASI are late to their appointments because “rideshare” patrons are required to wait a considerable amount of time in ASI vans before the van departs to the patron’s destination.

Sandy Varga reported that she agrees with Ms. Villaseñor in that ASI provides extended share rides that exceed one hour. She added that ASI has not improved its late arrivals and “no shows.” Ms. Vargas added that she believes the ASI audit report by the Inspector General was biased because ASI surveyed riders who had used ASI services only 10 times in the prior months. She stated that patrons who have had complaints against ASI should have been included in the survey process.

Victor H. Alegria, representing the East Los Angeles/San Gabriel Area spoke on Proposition 1A. He stated that he encouraged the state to not transfer revenues collected by local governments (cities, counties and special districts) to balance the state’s budget.

Daniel Garcia, representing Community Rehabilitation Services, reported that the Community Rehabilitation Services, Inc. will host its 2008 Disability Awareness Day on Saturday, September 20, 2008 at Centro Maravilla Service Center Parking Lot at 4716 E. Cesar Chavez Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90022, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information on the event, contact Frances or Maria at (323) 266-0453. Mr. Garcia encouraged the Commission and meeting attendees to participate in this event.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Cont.)

Joan Taylor, Ed.D. Director for Senior Opportunities reported on the *Immediate Needs Transportation Program* established in 1994 which afforded four free \$7 Taxi Vouchers to the senior and disabled community. She asked the Commission to write a letter of support for the restoration of these free vouchers to Los Angeles County Supervisors Zev Yaroslavsky (3rd District), and Gloria Molina (1st District).

She also reported that she will attend the next Commission meeting to share a letter with the Commission and meeting attendees that she received from Congressman Henry Waxman congratulating her for her work with the disability community.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Weller reported that Commissioner Mary Chambers resigned from the Commission due to her busy business and travel schedule.

She further added that Committee Structure and membership is very important to the success of the Commission and that the current Committee structure is comprised of the same Commissioners that participate in all committees. President Weller would like to discuss Committees and membership structure at the Commission retreat which will be scheduled soon.

1st Vice President Neal recommended that Committees such as the Legislation Committee which has not met this year become "Ad Hoc Committees" in order to work on legislation on an "as needed" basis. President Weller concurred with 1st Vice President Neal's recommendation, and will pursue discussion on the matter at the Commission's retreat.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission Staff, reported the following:

- The Executive Office Commission Services Division will host a Brown Act Workshop on September 18, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 140. RSVP is required to attend the workshop. More information about the workshop was included in Commissioners' packets.

STAFF REPORT (Cont.)

- The Demetria “Dedie” Ward Memorial Trust Account is closed. It was closed six months after it was opened.
- The Los Angeles County Commission for Women is sponsoring a Run/Walk for Health on Saturday, September 13, 2008, at 6:30 a.m. at the Pasadena Rose Bowl. The Commission has been invited to participate as an exhibitor free of charge.
- Ms. Osuna thanked the Commission for its generosity and kind words in a difficult time for her and her family and stated that the flower arrangement sent on behalf of the Commission for the passing of her mother, Ms. Maria Vega, was beautiful.

The Commission presented Commissioner Rubenstein with a scroll from Supervisor Knabe for his contribution to the Commission while serving as the 2nd Vice President of the Commission for the 2008-09 Term, and Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission Staff with a “*Certificate of Appreciation*” for the excellent coordination of the 2008 Bill Tainter Scholarship Presentation.

PRESENTATION BY DANIEL GARCIA, COMMUNITY REHABILITATION SERVICES, INC. ON THE TROPICAL THUNDER CAMPAIGN

Approval to send letter to appropriate parties regarding Tropical Thunder

Mr. Daniel Garcia, Systems Change Analyst, representing Community Rehabilitation Services, Inc. reported the following (Ms. Sandy Varga read Mr. Garcia’s presentation):

- On Monday, August 11, 2008, Mr. Garcia and other activists rallied against the movie “Tropic Thunder” at the movie premiere in Westwood, California. Mr. Garcia and individuals that rallied were particularly concerned with the use of the word “Retard” (R-word) in this movie, and were encouraging movie goers not to attend.

PRESENTATION BY DANIEL GARCIA, COMMUNITY REHABILITATION SERVICES, INC. ON THE TROPICAL THUNDER CAMPAIGN (Cont.)

- The rally was a great success. Many activists representing the developmental disabled community were present, such as members of the Special Olympics, Arc of Southeast Los Angeles County, and President Kecia B. Weller for the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities.
- Mr. Garcia noted that people with disabilities must fight for respect in order to not revert to past times when the developmental disabled community was not respected.
- Mr. Garcia concluded by saying that activists must come together and empower the developmentally disabled community. He believes that by doing so, the disability community will earn respect from legislators. Mr. Garcia stated that earning this respect will lead to empowering this community to advocate for a responsible state budget that will allow people with disabilities to live in their own home with programs supported by the state.

After discussion, the Commission concurred that it was not within the Commission's scope to send letters to appropriate parties regarding the movie "*Tropical Thunder*" for the offensive remarks used in the movie's script about the developmentally disabled. President Weller and 1st Vice President Neal agreed to discuss the issue further at the Commission's Executive Committee meeting, which will take place following this meeting to discuss methods of educating the community at large on addressing the disability community.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

President Weller reported that an Executive Committee meeting was not scheduled for the month of July.

Public Relations Committee

Disability Network Radio Program KTYM 1460 AM

1st Vice President Neal reported that the "Disability Network" is doing well.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont.)

Public Relations Committee

1st President Neal reported that on or about the first week of August 2008, the Mark and Brian Show of *KLOS* 95.5 was discussing the accomplishments of Helen Keller, and Brian was imitating and mocking the deaf and speech-impaired individuals. Vice President Neal added that this conduct is not acceptable. She strongly recommends that individuals that have this behavior towards the disability community be educated.

Events Committee

Access Awards Luncheon

1st Vice President Neal reported that this year's Special Award Recipients are the following:

- **Billy Barty Award**, Lou Ferrigno, Actor & Body Builder/Reserve Deputy for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- **Nadia Powers Leadership Award**, Chip Hazen, ADA Compliance Officer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO)
- **Chairperson's Award**, MOMPharmacy
- **Pearl Ella Johnson Award**, Alan H. Woo, Director of Planning and Program Development, Community Action Partnership of Orange County.
- **Jane Small Advocacy Award**, HALSA, Inc. (HIV & AIDS Legal Services Alliance, Inc.)

1st Vice President Neal, further added:

- The Commission will do a special tribute to Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke for her last year as County Supervisor and benefactor of the Access Awards Luncheons throughout the years.
- Ms. Glenda McCoo Wina will also be given a special acknowledgment for hosting past Access Awards Luncheons.
- The Committee recommends that the price for Exhibitor tables be reduced from \$250 to \$225.
- The Committee will try to secure a group of Boys Scouts to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance at the luncheon this year.
- The Committee will look for a larger venue for future events that will accommodate more attendees.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont.)

Events Committee

Bill Tainter Scholarship Program Wrap-Up Discussion

1st Vice President Neal thanked Commission Staff members for the coordination of the Bill Tainter Scholarship Program. She added that she was very pleased with the signage and banners that were made by Commission Staff, and would like to display the banner made for former Commissioner Nadia Powers at the 17th Annual Access Awards Luncheon.

She recommends that one of the scholarship recipients fill the Commission's youth seat. 1st Vice President Neal asked Commissioner Welt to share her experiences as a youth seat member with the scholarship recipients.

1st Vice President also reported the following:

- The Executive Committee will take the lead in the coordination of the Commission Retreat and on items for discussion at the retreat. This committee along with the Nominating Committee will also work on the election process for the Commission.
- Staff was provided with contact information to coordinate the Emergency Preparedness Training for the Commission with the Los Angeles City Fire Department.
- The Committee discussed the live streaming of the Disability Network program, and being in compliance with Section 508 Standards for the visually impaired, who may want to use "screen readers" and/or "voice recognition" devices. The Committee would like to have the radio programs archived on the Commission's webpage.
- The Committee also discussed the captioning of Commission meetings. The Committee agreed that the format and television set that are provided for captioning the meetings are accessible, and will continue to use the same process for meetings. The Commission will address any special need issues as they arise.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ASI Report

There was none.

President Neal discussed methods of rating the services provided Access Services, Inc. (ASI) that would give a fair representation of the quality of services provided by ASI.

REPORT OF GORDON ANTHONY, SENIOR DEPUTY COMPLIANCE OFFICER

In the absence of Mr. Anthony, Mr. Hagen reported the following:

- The Office of Affirmative Action Compliance started the transition and self-evaluation updates for the following departments: Mental Health, Beaches and Harbors and Public Social Services.
- The first 15 departments are still being monitored to ensure that data is being tracked accordingly.

1st Vice President Neal asked Mr. Hagen to provide a contact number for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department that handles the parking enforcement for accessible parking spaces.

ITEMS NOT POSTED FOR CONSIDERATION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

1st Vice President Neal requested that the following items be placed on a future agenda for discussion:

- Status of the Martin Luther King, Jr. MultiService Ambulatory Care Center and services provided to Medi-Cal patients.
- Discussion on a methodology to address reasonable accommodation requests.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Welt announced a project by *Business Development Associates*. The project calls for nominations of disabled veterans who would like to own a franchise and be able to maintain their disability benefits. For information, send a letter giving a history of yourself and the name/type of franchise desired, to: *Business Development Associates*, 5155 W. Rosecrans Ave., Suite 203, Hawthorne, CA 90250. Correspondence was submitted.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of 1st Vice President Neal, seconded by Commissioner Welt and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m. in memory of Isaac Hayes and Bernie Mac.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Kecia Weller, President
Janet A. Neal, 1st Vice President
Harley D. Rubenstein, 2nd Vice President
Bernard Siegel, Treasurer
Wan-Chun Chang
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost
Wendy L. Welt

Board of Supervisors

Don Ashton, Deputy Executive Officer
Sandra Barbee, Commission Services Chief
Rosemary Osuna, Staff
Mireya Rivera, Staff

Guests

Daniel Garcia,
Community Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
Jesse Padilla,
East Los Angeles Regional Center
Magda Carrero,
East Los Angeles Regional Center
Ray Louis McKeever,
Southern California Assoc for the
Deaf Blind
Joan Taylor,
Senior Disabled Transport Subsidies
Donald Brandon,
American Legion Post No. 8

Excused Absence

Maria Mustelier-Parrish
Donna Pomerantz
Michael Gureckas
Sheila Wright

Los Angeles County

Kurt Hagen, OAAC

Access Services, Inc.

Luis Pacheco, ASI

Phyllis Coto
Michael Agyin, LA City Hall
Marvin White
Sandy Varga
Maria Villaseñor
Victor H. Alegria
Laura Ripplinger, LifeSigns
Carl Swirkal
Michael Agyin, LA City Hall